

Artistic and Creative Endeavor: Exploring Fashion Design

What I Learned

I have learned so much from the year and a half that I spent working on my project. The overarching skill I learned was how to sew. First, I had to learn how to use my sewing machine. Then I learned how to sew different stitches and button holes. I also when I should use certain stiches such as the stitch needed for neck holes versus the right stitch for hems. There was a lot of lingo to learn as well. Moreover, I learned how to read patterns and properly cut fabric. Now I can make a tank top, skirt with pockets, a dress with capped sleeves, a pullover and doll clothes.

I have learned to be more patient. I have always been someone who wants to get stuff done right away. However when sewing sometimes I made mistakes and had to rip out stitches and re sew them. Also, some of the directions for patterns were confusing. Especially when making a more complex garment, it takes several hours to get the final product. I have also learned that sewing is not just an old ladies' thing. Many of the people I met were in their 20's and 30's.

I still have a lot to learn about sewing and fashion design, but by participating in STEP, I have gotten a great start!

Favorite Part of my Experience

My favorite part about learning how to sew is being able to express my creativity and sense of style through what I make. It is such an amazing feeling when I have finished sewing a garment that I have had pictured in my head for weeks. It is great having a hobby to turn to when I need a break from studying.

To be more specific, my favorite sewing project was the blocked printed pillows. This was my favorite project because I essentially got to print my own fabric and make it my own! I designed the pattern, carved the stamp and spent hours making mess when inking. The sewing was also very simple since it didn't require a pattern. Since the sewing required long straight stitches like the first project I did, which was a table cloth, I really got to see how far I have come in my sewing skills. My stitches were straighter, and my sewing was faster. I was able to practice my hand sewing skills too. The pillows not only look cute but are very comfortable.

Experience Description

My STEP project falls under the category of Artistic and Creative Endeavors, particularly under Arts Exploration. Overall, the objective of my project was to explore fashion design by expanding my sketching skills and learning how to sew my own clothes. The timeline for my project was June of 2016 through the end July of 2017. The STEP funds were used to pay for my sewing lessons, fabric, patterns, sewing tools like pins, needles and scissors and sketching materials.

To develop my sketching skills, I practiced how to draw fashion croquis freehand and made my designs more complex by incorporating fabric patterns, ruffles and accessories. To learn how to sew, I first learned how to use my sewing machine through lesson at Pins and Needles in Cleveland, Ohio. Next, I began sewing on my own by making a table cloth, altering my dad's shirts and making doll clothes. Then I took a variety of lessons at Sew to Speak in Worthington, Ohio, where I learned how to make several garments and how to decipher store-bought pattern directions. My final project for my STEP experience was block-printed pillows.

I now have a portfolio of sketches and garments that I have made throughout my experience. I have created a blog on u.osu.edu that documents my entire STEP experience. I plan to continue expanding my skills by making more complex garments and working with more difficult fabrics.



How my Experience has Impacted my Goals

- Academic Goals: Learning how to sew has lead me to the mindset to not be afraid to take classes that could be challenging and to take a class or two just for fun. Also, this project has further shown that mastering any skill comes with a lot of practice.
- Personal Goals: I hope to continue sewing as a hobby. This has inspired me to continue to step outside of my comfort zone and try new things. In the future, I hope to continue to meet people in my community that share my interests. This project has helped me become more patient, which has helped me work on my stress management. Also, sewing has helped me let go of being a perfectionist all the time, which will also help with my stress and anxiety.



Life Goals: I hope to sew my future children's clothes like their Halloween costumes. If I have the means and further develop my skills, I could start my own business or open my own boutique. By balancing this project, work and college has taught me the time management skills I need to make sure I make time to do things that I love and are fun.



Name: Alyssa Dalic

STEP Faculty Member: Annie Abell

Major: Biomedical Engineering

How my Experience Impacted me Personally

First, I have gained confidence after completing my STEP project. I was always surprised after finish a garment because they were all actually wearable. This was a surprise because I was new to sewing, and I thought sewing full garments was more complicated than it is. I always feel great when I wear the clothes that I made not only because I know how much hard work and fun went into making them, but also the clothes fir perfectly and complement my style and personality.

I also have discovered that there is a sewing community in Columbus that is full of people who are excited about learning how to sew. Sew to Speak is a sewing shop full of amazing people and products that show that sewing can be cool and modern. I have met so many women, who are just as new to sewing as I am.

Like I have mentioned above, I have become more patient. Moreover, learning how to sew has strengthened my perseverance. Sewing machines often malfunction and fabric often doesn't cooperate, which often has made me so mad that I wanted to scrap my project. However, the great thing about sewing is that most mistakes are fixable. I try to have this mentality in other aspects of my life like when I am frustrated over a homework problem.

